

SITUATION REPORT NO. 4
INCIDENT NO. 2001- 005
DATE: April 4, 2001 TIME: 2:00 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck, N.D. 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring Flooding -- Above normal fall precipitation and a high soil moisture content, compounded by eight years of prior flooding, have resulted in a strong probability for Devils Lake to continue its historic rise. Forecasters expect the Red River of the North to rise several feet above flood stage at gauging locations beginning near Wahpeton this weekend. Additionally, hydrologists for the National Weather Service (NWS) expect moderate to major spring flooding to occur along the Pembina River. Flooding has already occurred in the Souris and James River Basins.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No deaths or injuries have been reported.
3. DAMAGES: Forecasts by the Grand Forks Office of the National Weather Service (NWS) call for a wet period with significant precipitation for the remainder of this week, which will increase the flood threat along eastern area rivers. Precipitation levels are expected to be one-half inch or less, but a stronger storm system that is expected to move into North Dakota this weekend will bring the potential for additional widespread precipitation.

The NWS issued flood warnings late April 3 for the Red River at Wahpeton and Fargo after warmer temperatures during the past few days increased the snow and ice melt. The forecast takes into account the additional runoff that is expected to result from the one-quarter to one-half inch of rain expected during April 3-4. The level on April 4 measured 7.03 feet; flood stage is 10 feet. A five-day forecast indicates that the river will continue to rise during the next five days at Wahpeton to 16.1 feet on Monday, April 9. The latest flood outlook places the 50 percent predicted crest level at 17.5 feet in Wahpeton. The level at Fargo measured 17.67 feet on April 4, one-half foot above its flood stage. The five-day forecast calls for the river to rise to 25.4 feet on April 9. The 50 percent predicted crest level is 34 feet.

A flood warning remains in effect for the lower Souris River. The river at Towner crested on April 3 at 55.2 feet, 3.2 feet over flood stage. On April 4, the river had fallen to 55.0 ft. Bantry may crest around 11.8 feet by April 5. Westhope is nearing

flood stage and continues to rise slowly. A crest for this location is not expected for possibly a couple of weeks.

A flood warning also remains in effect for the lower James River, where the river is cresting at one foot above the 12-foot flood stage near Ludden. Minor flooding was occurring. The river level at Ludden has been nearly steady for the past couple of days. New precipitation may push it up slightly but overall the moisture effect will be to delay crests for James and Souris Rivers and slow the fall in areas already dropping.

As part of preparations for potential spring flooding along the Red River, staff from the City of Grand Forks Engineering Department recently completed an inspection of the city's levee system. The inspection revealed a fault crack in the earthen dike and a slight joint separation in a cement floodwall in the Lincoln Park area.

In Pembina County, frost heaving is causing water breaks in the cities of Walhalla and Cavalier. A trailer court and the courthouse area in Cavalier were without water on April 3. Levels for the Tongue River were high in the Bathgate area, but were not overflowing.

Officials for the city of Max are concerned that snowmelt will raise the level of water surrounding the city's lagoon. Water is encroaching on the lagoon, and seepage from the surrounding dike may be taking place, causing possible outside contamination. The city has been experiencing problems with its lagoon system since 1999 when runoff from summer rains caused dike erosion.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: No change from previous reports.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: At the request of state officials, the St. Paul District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) is providing technical assistance to the city of Grand Forks to include inspection of problem areas along the city's levee system, and to the city of Fargo.

On April 1, the COE reported the completion of its construction activities and other protective actions to assist the city of Wahpeton in its flood preparedness efforts. The COE contracted with private contractors to build approximately 10,000 lineal feet of emergency levees, which required 9,740 yards of impervious fill. Top-of-levee elevation measures 20 feet. The new levees are an extension of existing flood-control levees and cost approximately \$170,000 to construct. COE officials

estimate that the emergency and existing levees will prevent approximately \$17 million in flood damages.

The N.D. Department of Transportation (DOT) is prestaging crisafulli pumps at the Wahpeton DOT District Office for potential use.

The city of Grand Forks recently conducted three pre-flood meetings to review flood fighting and responsibilities. All meetings have included representatives of city agencies. The April 3 meeting was also attended by staff from Excel Energy (formerly Northern States Power), the University of North Dakota (UND) and the National Weather Service. UND reported that its generator pumps are on stand by. The city has secured five additional pumps and two generators from private sources to supplement flood preparedness activity. Grand Forks officials are producing a seven-minute video on flood preparation and flood tips that will be aired on the local community access channel. A contractor was scheduled to begin hauling clay on April 4 to top off a dike in the 2800 block of Olson Drive. Workers were also scheduled to install closures in the 3100 block of Elmwood Drive and by the Riverside Pool on Lewis Boulevard. Tentative plans call for the Grand Forks Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to open April 9.

Officials for the city of Neche and Pembina County issued emergency declarations on April 3. The county emergency manager and a public works employee have been meeting with the State Water Commission and officials for the cities of Bathgate, Neche and Pembina to discuss preparedness issues to include resource needs and emergency assistance for dike enhancement or construction. The County Board of Commissioners authorized purchase of a sandbag machine, which will be available for use by the county and its cities. Sand and sandbags will be available at the county shop. The emergency manager recently conducted a meeting with all functional coordinators to review the county Emergency Operations Plan. In Neche, city and county forces have begun activity to enhance the dike system.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: With the exception of ongoing technical assistance, no additional requests have been received.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No additional resources are on scene at this time.
9. OTHER: Appropriate state and local emergency operations plans have been implemented.

Situation Reports published by North Dakota Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director